

What is claimed is:

Sub B 1. An ink composition comprising a colorant; a polymer covering the colorant and having, in its molecular chain, sites possessing ultraviolet absorbing activity and/or photostabilizing activity; water; and a water-soluble organic solvent.

2. The ink composition according to claim 1, wherein the polymer functions as a dispersant and covers the colorant.

3. The ink composition according to claim 2, wherein either the weight average molecular weight or the number average molecular weight of the polymer is 1,000 to 50,000.

Sub E 4. The ink composition according to claim 2 ~~or 3~~, wherein the polymer has hydrophilic and hydrophobic groups.

5. The ink composition according to claim 4, wherein the hydrophilic group is at least one member selected from the group consisting of carboxyl, sulfonic acid, phosphoric acid, amido, and amino groups.

6. The ink composition according to claim 4, wherein the hydrophobic group is at least one member selected from the group consisting of alkyl, substituted alkyl, aromatic monocyclic hydrocarbon, fused polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon, heteromonocyclic, and fused heterocyclic groups.

7. The ink composition according to claim 4, wherein the polymer is a random copolymer, a block copolymer, or a graft copolymer.

8. The ink composition according to ~~any one of~~ ^{claim 2} ~~claims 2 to 7~~, which further comprises polymeric fine particles having a diameter of 5 to 200 nm.

9. The ink composition according to claim 8, wherein the polymeric fine particles are dispersed particles of a polymer emulsion having a minimum film-forming temperature of 30°C or below.

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10. The ink composition according to claim 1, wherein the polymer is in the form of fine particles covering the colorant.

11. The ink composition according to claim 10, wherein the colorant has a glass transition point of 30°C or below.

12. The ink composition according to claim 11, wherein the water-soluble organic solvent has a boiling point of 180°C or above.

13. The ink composition according to ^{claim 10} ~~any one of claims 10 to 12~~, wherein the polymer has a carboxyl or sulfonic acid group as a functional group.

14. The ink composition according to ^{claim 10} ~~any one of claims 10 to 13~~, wherein the colorant has a particle diameter of 5 to 500 nm.

15. The ink composition according to ^{claim 10} ~~any one of claims 10 to 14~~, which further comprises other colorant.

16. The ink composition according to claim 15, wherein the colorant is a pigment or a dye.

17. The ink composition according to ^{claim 1} ~~any one of claims 1 to 16~~, wherein the polymer comprises a polymer composed mainly of a thermoplastic polymer.

18. The ink composition according to claim 17, wherein the thermoplastic polymer is selected from the group consisting of an ethylene/vinyl acetate copolymer, an ethylene/ethyl acrylate copolymer, polyethylene, polypropylene, polystyrene, a poly(meth)acrylic ester, a styrene/(meth)acrylic ester copolymer, a styrene/maleic acid copolymer, a styrene/itaconic ester copolymer, polyvinyl acetate, polyester, polyurethane, and polyamide.

~~Sub D2~~ 19. The ink composition according to ^{claim 1} ~~any one of claims 1 to 18~~, wherein the site possessing the ultraviolet-absorbing activity and/or the photostabilizing activity is selected from the group consisting of aromatic monocyclic hydrocarbon, fused polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon, heteromonocyclic, and

Sub B2
cont

fused heterocyclic groups, and has absorbing activity in a wavelength region from 200 to 400 nm.

20. The ink composition according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 19~~, wherein the site possessing the ultraviolet absorbing activity or the photostabilizing activity has a benzotriazole, benzophenone, salicylate, cyanoacrylate, hindered phenol, or hindered amine skeleton.

21. The ink composition according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 20~~, wherein the polymer is a polymer or a copolymer using, as a monomer, a benzotriazole ultraviolet absorber having an ethylenically unsaturated bond, a benzophenone ultraviolet absorber having an ethylenically unsaturated bond, a salicylate ultraviolet absorber having an ethylenically unsaturated bond, a cyanoacrylate ultraviolet absorber having an ethylenically unsaturated bond, a hindered phenol ultraviolet absorber having an ethylenically unsaturated bond, or a hindered amine photostabilizer having an ethylenically unsaturated bond.

22. The ink composition according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 21~~, which is used in ink jet recording.

23. A recording method comprising the step of depositing an ink composition onto a recording medium to perform printing, the ink composition being one according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 22~~.

24. An ink jet recording method comprising the steps of: ejecting a droplet of an ink composition; and depositing the droplet onto a recording medium to perform printing, the ink composition being one according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 22~~.

25. A record printed by the recording method according to claim 23 or 24.

26. A colorant comprising: a dye or a pigment; and a polymer covering the dye or the pigment and having, in its molecular chain, sites possessing ultraviolet absorbing activity and/or photostabilizing activity, the

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colorant being in the form of fine particles.

27. The colorant according to claim 26, wherein the site possessing the ultraviolet-absorbing activity and/or the photostabilizing activity is selected from the group consisting of aromatic monocyclic hydrocarbon, fused polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon, heteromonocyclic, and fused heterocyclic groups, and has absorbing activity in a wavelength region from 200 to 400 nm.

28. The colorant according to claim 26 ~~or 27~~, wherein the site possessing the ultraviolet absorbing activity or the photostabilizing activity has a benzotriazole, benzophenone, salicylate, cyanoacrylate, hindered phenol, or hindered amine skeleton.

29. The colorant according to ~~any one of claims 26 to 28~~, wherein the polymer is a polymer or a copolymer using, as a monomer, a benzotriazole ultraviolet absorber having an ethylenically unsaturated bond, a benzophenone ultraviolet absorber having an ethylenically unsaturated bond, a salicylate ultraviolet absorber having an ethylenically unsaturated bond, a cyanoacrylate ultraviolet absorber having an ethylenically unsaturated bond, a hindered phenol ultraviolet absorber having an ethylenically unsaturated bond, or a hindered amine photostabilizer having an ethylenically unsaturated bond.

30. The colorant according to ~~any one of claims 26 to 29~~, wherein the colorant has a glass transition point of 30°C or below.

31. The colorant according to ~~any one of claims 26 to 30~~, wherein the polymer comprises a polymer composed mainly of a thermoplastic polymer.

32. The colorant according to claim 31, wherein the thermoplastic polymer is selected from the group consisting of an ethylene/vinyl acetate copolymer, an ethylene/ethyl acrylate copolymer, polyethylene, polypropylene, polystyrene, a poly(meth)acrylic ester, a styrene/(meth)acrylic ester copolymer, a styrene/maleic

acid copolymer, a styrene/itaconic ester copolymer, polyvinyl acetate, polyester, polyurethane, and polyamide.

33. The colorant according to claim 32, wherein the polymer has a carboxyl or sulfonic acid group as a functional group.

34. The ink composition according to ^{Claim 26} ~~any one of~~
~~claims 26 to 33~~, wherein the colorant has a particle diameter of 5 to 500 nm.

35. The colorant according to ^{claim 26} ~~any one of claims 26~~
~~to 34~~, which is in the form of a polymer emulsion.

36. The colorant according to ~~any one of claims 36 to 35~~, which is used in an ink for ink jet recording.

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C³